

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Washington, DC 20405

January 30, 1991

FIRMR BULLETIN C-12

TO: Heads of Federal agencies
SUBJECT: Federal Software Exchange Program

1. Purpose. This bulletin provides information and guidance on the Federal Software Exchange Program (FSEP).
2. Expiration date. This bulletin contains information of a continuing nature and will remain in effect until canceled.

3. Contents.

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4. Related material.

FIRMR 201-21.403

5. Information and assistance. The Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service (NTIS) publishes the "Directory of Computer Software" that may ordered from:

Department of Commerce
NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: FTS or (703) 487-4650
Order Number: PB 88-190962

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6. Definitions.

"Common-use software" means software that deals with applications common to many agencies, that would be useful to other agencies, and is written in such a way that minor variations in requirements can be accommodated without significant programming effort.

7. Acronyms.

FIP Federal Information Processing
FSEC Federal Software Exchange Center
FSEP Federal Software Exchange Program
NTIS National Technical Information Service
OTA Office of Technical Assistance

8. Program description. The FSEP is applicable to common-use FIP software developed or revised by or for Federal agencies. It is not applicable to software that is classified or proprietary. It is not applicable to software to which the Government does not possess full rights of ownership. The FSEP is administered by the Department of Commerce's NTIS under an interagency agreement between NTIS and GSA's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA). The program encourages the sharing of common-use FIP software and related documentation. Federal agencies report their common-use software to the FSEC. FSEC facilitates Government-wide sharing of reported common-use software.

9. Agency responsibilities.

a. Identification of common-use software. To identify and make available common-use FIP software, as required by FIRMR 201-21.403, Federal agencies should take the following steps:

(1) Review software within the agency to identify common-use software that may be of use to other agencies.

(2) Prepare and submit abstracts of identified common-use software to:

Department of Commerce
NTIS - Federal Software Exchange Center
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161

(3) Notify FSEC promptly of changes to or problems with common-use software previously reported.

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(4) Make a one-time submission, within 15 days of receipt of the FSEC request, of the common-use software and its supporting documentation. Sufficient documentation should be provided to facilitate implementation by other users. It should contain, as a minimum--

- (i) A narrative;
- (ii) User instructions, which should include program interface requirements; system resource requirements; identity of the computer on which the software is operational; program language; the name, number, and release of the system under which the software is operating; applicable data communications interface requirements; and applicable error message descriptions with recommended corrective actions;
- (iii) A logic flowchart to indicate the ease of removal or addition of program modules;
- (iv) Sample inputs and outputs; and
- (v) Program listing of the source and object coding as well as available cross-reference listings generated by the applicable assembler or compiler.

b. Software maintenance. The submitting agency is not responsible to another agency for maintenance of common-use software submitted to FSEC.

c. Data. No data files or data bases will be included with the common-use software. No private or personal data will constitute any portion of the common-use software and supporting documentation to be reported and exchanged by FSEC.

10. FSEC Responsibilities. FSEC's responsibilities include--

a. Maintaining a central library of summary descriptions of common-use software, including a complete index of the inventory and master copies of requested software and supporting documentation;

b. Providing a copy of the requested common-use software and supporting documentation, at the published price, to a requesting agency;

c. Editing, screening, and compiling agency abstracts of common-use software submitted for exchange;

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- d. Functioning as a central point of contact with agencies for information and dissemination of available common-use software;
- e. Helping agencies identify common-use software to satisfy their requirements;
- f. Helping agencies obtain information concerning technical problems with common-use software released through the FSEC by referring users to the source of the common-use software; and
- g. Notifying agencies of changes to common-use software obtained through FSEC.

11. Cancellation. FIRMR Bulletin 32 is canceled.

Thomas J. Buckholtz
Commissioner
Information Resources
Management Service

